Board of
Barbering & Cosmetology

About the Board

CONSUMER INFORMATION SHEET

What is the history of the Board?

- In 1927, the Board of Barber Examiners and the Board of Cosmetology were established. The Board of Barber Examiners governed the barbering profession, and the Board of Cosmetology governed the cosmetology profession.

- In 1939 the Manicurist license and Electrology license were added

- In 1978 the Esthetician license was added

- In 1992, the Board of Barber Examiners and the Board of Cosmetology were merged to create a single Board of Barbering and Cosmetology

- In 1997, the Board of Barbering and Cosmetology was eliminated by the State Legislature. Its functions were transferred directly to the Department of Consumer Affairs and were administered by the Bureau of Barbering and Cosmetology.

- On January 1, 2003, the Legislature reinstated the Board of Barbering and Cosmetology. The Board consists of five public members and four professional members.

What are the Board's responsibilities?

- The Board's responsibilities are protecting and educating consumers who seek barbering, cosmetology, and electrology services. The Board also regulates the individuals who provide the services and the salons in which the services are performed.

Who must be licensed by the Board?

- Anyone who provides the following services for compensation must be licensed by the Board of Barbering & Cosmetology: hairdressing and styling, hair cutting, shaving, manicuring, removing unwanted hair, skin care, or applying cosmetics.

- In order to be licensed, individuals must complete a certain number of hours of course work and practical, and must also pass a written and practical (hands-on) test.

- The Board also licenses the salons and barbershops where these services are provided and regulates health and safety and curricula issues in approved barber, cosmetology, and electrology schools.

About the Board of Barbering & Cosmetology

Does the Board handle complaints?

- Yes, the Board handles consumer complaints involving gross negligence and/or incompetence; unsanitary conditions in salons, barbershops, and schools of barbering, cosmetology, and electrology; unlicensed practice of barbering, cosmetology, and electrology; operation of an unlicensed salon or barbershop; and misrepresentation or false advertising of services.

- To file a complaint, download a complaint form from the Board's Web site (www.BarberCosmo.ca.gov) or call the Department of Consumer Affairs Consumer Information Center at 800/952-5210 and request a complaint form.

Does the Board give exams?

- Yes, the Board ensures that applicants for licensure have completed the necessary training and passed a written and practical examination. The examination requires that the individual demonstrate that he/she has the knowledge and skills required to protect the public's health and safety.

What beauty services are not regulated by the Board?

- The following services are not regulated by the Board, even though they may be performed by a Board licensee in a salon or barbershop setting

  - Permanent Cosmetics/Body Piercing/Tattooing
    − Practitioners are required to register with their local county health departments

  - Tanning Salons
    − The Board does not regulate tanning salons, although some licensed establishments do have tanning booths. All tanning salons and tanning booths in salons licensed by this Board must operate in compliance with the Filante Tanning Act.

  - Aroma/Massage Therapists
    − Individuals who provide aroma or massage therapy are not regulated by the Board but must comply with applicable local regulations.

  - Hair Threading
    − Assembly Bill 282 (2003) excluded threading, a technique for removing unwanted hair, from the practice of barbering and cosmetology.

  - Hair Braiding
    − Senate Bill 235 (2000) excluded hair braiding from the practice of barbering and cosmetology. Hair braiding is a service that results in tension on hair strands or roots created by twisting, wrapping, weaving, extending, locking, or braiding hair by hand or mechanical device.